

# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

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### **THESIS**

**CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS AND  
CONCORDANCE THEORY: A CASE STUDY OF  
ARGENTINA**

by

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December 1998

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A CASE STUDY OF ARGENTINA**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment  
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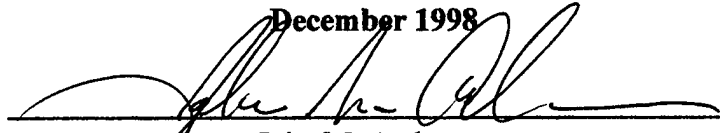
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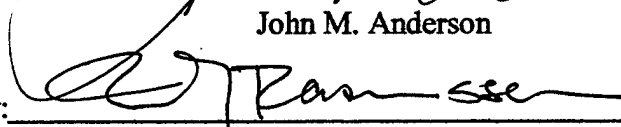
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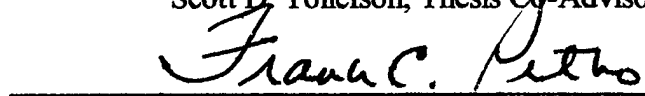
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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis is to test Rebecca L. Schiff's "Theory of Concordance" against the case of Argentina. Using the case study method to determine whether this neglected theory of civil-military relations accounts for the occurrence of military interventions in Argentina, this thesis also examines whether the theory provides a better tool than separation theory by which to analyze civil-military relations in Latin America. Separation theory describes the separation of civil and military institutions as it occurs in the United States and suggests that it is the ideal model for other nations to emulate. Concordance theory argues that three partners —the military, the political elites, and the citizenry —should aim for a cooperative relationship that may or may not involve separation, but does not require it. What is interesting about this theory is that it accounts for the U.S. model as well. The thesis concludes that in the case of Argentina, separation theory better predicts the mechanisms by which a civilian government may establish control over its formerly interventionist military. However, with modification, concordance theory may provide insights into how that control may be maintained following the transition to enduring democracy.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
A. SETTING THE STAGE.....	1
B. ABOUT DEFINITIONS.....	3
C. CHAPTER OUTLINE.....	7
<b>II. REVIEW OF CURRENT CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS (CMR)</b>	
<b>THEORY.....</b>	<b>9</b>
A. SEPARATION THEORY.....	9
1. Ascendency of Separation Theory.....	9
2. Huntington's School of Separation.....	10
3. Structural Realist School.....	13
B. CRITIQUE OF SEPARATION THEORY.....	17
<b>III. SUMMARY OF CONCORDANCE THEORY.....</b>	<b>23</b>
A. INTENT OF THE THEORY.....	23
B. THE THREE PARTNERS.....	25
1. The Military.....	25
2. The Political Leadership.....	25
3. The Citizenry.....	26
C. THE FOUR INDICATORS.....	27
1. The Social Composition of the Officer Corps.....	27
2. The Political Decision-Making Process.....	28
3. The Recruitment Method.....	29
4. The Military Style.....	30
<b>IV. THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF CIVIL-MILITARY</b>	
<b>RELATIONS IN ARGENTINA.....</b>	<b>33</b>
A. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NORTH AND LATIN AMERICA.....	34
B. THE PROBLEM OF BUREAUCRATIC AUTHORITARIANISM IN	
ARGENTINA.....	37
<b>V. EVALUATION OF CONCORDANCE THEORY IN ARGENTINA.....</b>	<b>41</b>
A. FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION.....	41
B. THE ERA OF MILITARY COUPS 1930-1983.....	43
C. FOLLOWING THE RETURN TO DEMOCRACY 1983.....	53
D. ARGENTINA AS A CASE OF CONCORDANCE ?.....	60
1. The Social Composition of the Officer Corps.....	60
2. The Political Decision-Making Process.....	61
3. The Recruitment Method.....	63
4. The Military Style.....	64
<b>VI. CONCLUSIONS.....</b>	<b>67</b>
A. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS.....	67
B. CRITIQUE OF CONCORDANCE THEORY.....	69
1. The Three Partners.....	69



2. The Four Indicators.....	71
C. IMPLICATIONS.....	73
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST.....</b>	<b>81</b>

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As more nations are transitioning to democratic models than at any time since the Second World War, "democratic peace theory" has become the centerpiece of U.S. foreign policy. This is based on the theory that democracies, generally speaking, do not fight other democracies. Given that these transitions to democracy are from former authoritarian regimes with interventionist militaries, the topic of civil-military relations has reemerged as a vital subject of debate and study. Rebecca L. Schiff notes that "a major conclusion of current civil-military relations theory is that militaries should remain physically and ideologically separated from political institutions."

Separation theory describes the separation of civil and military institutions as it occurs in the United States and suggests that it is the ideal model for other nations to emulate. Rebecca L. Schiff offers an alternative theory of concordance that argues that three partners—the military, the political elites, and the citizenry—should aim for a cooperative relationship that may or may not involve separation, but does not require it. This theory, as opposed to the U.S. model of separation, allows for a high level of integration between the military and other parts of society, as only one of several types of civil-military relationships. What is interesting about this theory is that it accounts for the U.S. model as well.

Just as there are many versions of democracy, Schiff argues that there may exist various types of civil-military relationships and that these arrangements are rooted in the cultural and historical experiences of the nations they serve. Concordance theory relies on the agreement of the "three social partners" with respect to "four indicators": the social

composition of the officer corps, the political decision-making process, recruitment method, and military style. If there is general acceptance among the partners with respect to these indicators, then the likelihood of military interventions is diminished. The theory has the additional value of explaining the institutional and cultural conditions that affect relations with the military.

The purpose of this thesis is to test Rebecca L. Schiff's "Theory of Concordance" against the case of Argentina. I use the case study method to determine whether this relatively neglected theory of civil-military relations accounts for the occurrence of military interventions in the past and the subsequent return to democracy. Secondary to this, I examine whether the theory provides a better tool than separation theory by which to analyze civil-military relations in this case and the suitability of its generalization to other cases both within Latin America and trans-regionally.

The bulk of Schiff's work on this topic has been focused on the states of Israel and India. An original aspect of this thesis is that it represents the first time that concordance theory has been tested against a Latin American case. Due to historical, cultural, and social differences with Schiff's cases, Argentina serves as an ideal test case for the "Theory of Concordance" within the context of the Latin American arena.

The following provides a brief description of the organization of the chapters of this thesis. Chapter I is the introduction. Chapter II provides a review of the current state of civil-military relations (CMR) theory. Chapter III introduces "concordance theory" and lays the groundwork for the testing of the theory in subsequent chapters. Chapter IV, explores the historical and cultural background of the Argentine case in order to highlight

why current theory (based within the context of the U.S. experience) may not necessarily apply to Argentina. Chapter V focuses on testing the case of Argentina against Schiff's theory of concordance. Chapter VI concludes with a summary of the findings.

My primary criticism of concordance theory is a methodological one. Simply put, I am not certain that the phenomena observed in the case of Argentina (or in Schiff's cases of Israel and India) are necessarily the result of agreement or disagreement among the "three partners" with respect to the four indicators of concordance. The one part of concordance theory that seems to hold promise is its core argument against current civil-military relations theory. Unlike current CMR theory—with a focus on its western-bound, dichotomous, and institutional nature—the theory of concordance highlights dialogue, accommodation, and shared values or objectives among the military, the political elites, and society. It is almost unthinkable that current CMR theory would apply without modification in a Latin American case. Yet, in the case of Argentina, Huntington's prescription for separation and professionalization of the military seems to have worked in the period since 1983. However, it would be unlikely that such prescriptions would have been viable in the period prior to the return to democracy, due to the historical and cultural context of the time.

I argue that each nation must find its own way to democratic forms. Once memories of old patterns of authoritarianism have been supplanted by more democratic experiences, then concordance will have the opportunity to take hold.



## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. SETTING THE STAGE

With the end of the Cold War and the attendant loss of the central strategic paradigm—containment—scholars, statesmen, and soldiers alike have struggled to redefine the realities of the “new world order.” This change has manifested itself in different ways. As more nations are transitioning to democratic models than at any time since the Second World War, “democratic peace theory” has become the centerpiece of U.S. foreign policy. This is based on the theory that democracies, generally speaking, do not fight other democracies. Given that these transitions to democracy are from former authoritarian regimes with interventionist militaries, the topic of civil-military relations has reemerged as a vital subject of debate and study. Rebecca L. Schiff notes that “a major conclusion of current civil-military relations theory is that militaries should remain physically and ideologically separated from political institutions.”<sup>1</sup>

Separation theory describes the separation of civil and military institutions as it occurs in the United States and suggests that it is the ideal model for other nations to emulate.<sup>2</sup> Rebecca L. Schiff offers an alternative theory of concordance that argues that three partners—the military, the political elites, and the citizenry—should aim for a cooperative relationship that may or may not involve separation, but does not require it.

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<sup>1</sup> Rebecca L. Schiff, “Civil-Military Relations Reconsidered: A Theory of Concordance,” *Armed Forces and Society* 22, no. 1 (fall 1995): 7.

<sup>2</sup> For extensive discussion of this theory see Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, (Cambridge and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957), 189-192.

This theory, as opposed to the U.S. model of separation, allows for a high level of integration between the military and other parts of society, as only one of several types of civil-military relationships. What is interesting about this theory is that it accounts for the U.S. model as well.

Just as there are many versions of democracy, Schiff argues that there may exist various types of civil-military relationships and that these arrangements are rooted in the cultural and historical experiences of the nations they serve. Concordance theory relies on the agreement of the “three social partners” with respect to “four indicators”: the social composition of the officer corps, the political decision-making process, recruitment method, and military style. If there is general acceptance among the partners with respect to these indicators, then the likelihood of military interventions is diminished. The theory has the additional value of explaining the institutional and cultural conditions that affect relations with the military.

The purpose of this thesis is to test Rebecca L. Schiff’s “Theory of Concordance” against the case of Argentina. I will use the case study method to determine whether this relatively neglected theory of civil-military relations accounts for the occurrence of military interventions in the past and the subsequent return to democracy. Secondary to this, I will examine whether the theory provides a better tool than separation theory by which to analyze civil-military relations in this case and the suitability of its generalization to other cases both within Latin America and trans-regionally.

The bulk of Schiff’s work on this topic has been focused on the states of Israel and India. An original aspect of this thesis is that it represents the first time that concordance

theory has been tested against a Latin American case. I have specifically selected Argentina because, while it has experienced both military interventions and returns to democracy, it represents a different sociopolitical experience than the cases Schiff has explored. In the case of Argentina, the colonial experience was Spanish and centralist. Argentina has habitually produced "personalistic" presidents who wield disproportionate power. These early experiences have continued to the present and affect the nature of politics, society, and the civil-military relationship in the case. Due to historical, cultural, and social differences with Schiff's cases, Argentina should serve as an ideal test case for Schiff's "Theory of Concordance" within the context of the Latin American arena.

## **B. ABOUT DEFINITIONS**

In order to avoid repetitive discussion of the meaning of various terms within the body of this text, I offer the following definitions. They represent the most important concepts used in this thesis. Some have specific significance for Latin America. I do not claim that these are the only definitions possible or even that they are the best available. Rather, they help to set the stage for the discussion that follows.

**Separation or "Objective Civilian Control" Theory** refers to the widely held premise that militaries need to remain physically and ideologically separated from political institutions. Originally coined by Samuel P. Huntington in *The Soldier and the State*, "objective civilian control" involves:

- 1) a high level of military professionalism and recognition by military officers of the limits of their professional competence; 2) the effective subordination of the military to the civilian political leaders who make the basic decisions on foreign



and military policy; 3) the recognition and acceptance by that leadership of an area of professional competence and autonomy for the military; and 4) as a result, the minimization of military intervention in politics and of political intervention by the military.<sup>3</sup>

**Concordance Theory** is based on the argument that there may exist various types of civil-military relationships and that these arrangements are rooted in the cultural and historical experiences of the nations they serve. Concordance theory relies on the agreement of the three social partners—the military, the political elite, and the citizenry—with respect to four indicators: The social composition of the officer corps, the political decision-making process, recruitment method, and military style. If there is general acceptance among the partners with respect to these indicators, then the likelihood of military interventions is diminished.<sup>4</sup>

**Presidentialism** is defined as “a governmental system in which the president dominates all institutions of government and is the major locus of political power in the country.” Although most Latin American nations patterned their constitutions on the U.S. model, years of authoritarian regimes and constitutional tampering have weakened the separation of powers and centralized them in the office of the president. This is further compounded by Latin cultural tendencies toward personalism, centralized power, and

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<sup>3</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, “Reforming Civil-Military Relations,” in *Civil-Military Relations and Democracy* eds. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 3-4.

<sup>4</sup> “Concordance theory,” by not excluding democratic or democratizing nations with a long tradition of civilian control over the military, and by allowing for the U.S. model of “separation,” is actually more comprehensive than separation theory. See Schiff, “Civil-Military Relations Reconsidered,” 7-10.

weak political parties.<sup>5</sup>

**Populism or Populist Presidencies** are those administrations that claim to represent the common people and draw their power from what is often a charismatic appeal to the masses.

**Centralized Government** from a Latin American perspective is the direct control of the nation from the capital city. Central government exercises much more political power than that of state or provincial governments. Political power is centered there and decisions emanate outward. The phenomenon is thought to be the result of the legacy of Spanish and Portuguese rule in the New World. Although there is much variation in the degree of centralism among Latin American countries, the phenomenon is widespread.<sup>6</sup>

**Federalism** is defined as "a political system that constitutionally divides the powers and functions of government between central and regional governments." However, although considered a federal union, Argentina is dominated by a central government.<sup>7</sup>

**Bureaucratic Authoritarianism** is a distinctly exclusionary and non-democratic system of government. Central actors in the dominant coalition include high-level technocrats—military and civilian, both within and outside the state—working in association with foreign sources of capital. This new elite eliminates electoral competition

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<sup>5</sup> Ernest E. Rossi and Jack C. Plano, *Latin America: A Political Dictionary* (Oxford, England: ABC-CLIO, 1992), 137.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 24-25.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 130-131.

and controls the political participation of the popular sector. Public policy is concentrated on the promotion of advanced industrialization. The technocrats have a low level of tolerance for the ongoing political and economic crises and perceive high levels of popular sector politicization as an obstacle to economic growth and eventually form a coalition that ultimately establishes a repressive bureaucratic authoritarian system. The term was popularized by Guillermo O'Donnell who examined the cases of Brazil in the post-1964 period and Argentina from 1966 to 1970 and from 1976 to 1983.<sup>8</sup>

**Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI)** is a strategy of economic development intended to reverse the trend of external dependency on imported goods. The intent is to raise tariffs on imports while replacing the production of the same items with domestic production. The first part of the implementation is known as the "easy phase" because domestic demand for the goods is great due to the relatively high cost of imports. Once the domestic market has been exhausted, however, it becomes increasingly difficult to continue growth because protectionist government policies have made the goods uncompetitive on the international market. In Latin America this situation led to high inflation, balance of payment problems, high unemployment and a crisis in the populist governments that created ISI. In the wake of these failed policies, bureaucratic authoritarian type regimes emerged in many cases and set about to "deepen" industrialization through the domestic manufacture of consumer durables and intermediate and capital goods. This required larger, more efficient, and highly capitalized enterprises,

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<sup>8</sup> David Collier, "The Bureaucratic-Authoritarian Model." *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America* ed. David Collier (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 24-28.

often the affiliates of multinational corporations.

### C. CHAPTER OUTLINE

The following provides a brief description of the organization of the chapters of this thesis. Chapter II provides a review of the current state of civil-military relations (CMR) theory. Since the current literature is dominated by those who support separation theory, I will begin with an explanation of that theory. Further, I will show how the theory is tied to an ethnocentric view of the U.S. cultural, social and historical experience. Finally, I will critique the theory on the grounds that it is not comprehensive enough, that it does not allow that different experiences will breed different civil-military relations, and that few alternatives to separation theory have been developed and tested.

Chapter III introduces "concordance theory" and lays the groundwork for the testing of the theory in subsequent chapters. Here I will rely heavily on the limited theoretical work of Rebecca L. Schiff to explain the intent of the theory and to define the variables fundamental to it.

In Chapter IV, I will explore the historical and cultural background of the Argentine case in order to highlight why current theory (based within the context of the U.S. experience) may not necessarily apply to Argentina. Central to Schiff's theory is that different civil-military relationships are the result of different historical and cultural experiences.

Chapter V will focus on testing the case of Argentina against Schiff's theory of concordance. Here I will determine whether concordance existed between the "three

partners” with respect to the four indicators during the periods prior to the last military coup and at the time of the most recent return to democracy. By testing the case at these two critical times, I intend to: 1) determine the validity of Schiff’s theory in two Latin American cases; and 2) identify any weaknesses in the theory.

In Chapter VI, I will conclude this thesis with a summary of my findings. Additionally, I will critique “concordance” theory by examining any weaknesses and explore the possibility that other factors may better explain the phenomena observed. Finally, I will discuss the implications of my findings for CMR theory.

## II. REVIEW OF CURRENT CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS (CMR) THEORY

### A. CURRENT THEORY

#### 1. Ascendency of Separation Theory

Since its theoretical ascendancy in the 1950s and 1960s, the idea of separation between civilian and military institutions has become the dominant paradigm of civil-military (CMR) literature. Some scholars of this period emphasized the problems with militaries abroad that seemed dominant at the time, including "supplantment," coup, and blackmail.<sup>9</sup> Other scholars of the period focused on the positive contributions of militaries to domestic political and economic development. However, the bulk of the literature clearly centered on the threat that militaries posed to their governments and societies and prescribed strict separation as the remedy to domestic coercion and dominance by the military.<sup>10</sup>

Given the context of the time in which the debate unfolded, civil-military relations theorist and theory became fixated on the issue of how a civilian government controls its

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<sup>9</sup> For an example of this perspective and discussion of various forms of domestic military intervention, see Samuel Finer, *The Man on Horseback* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1988), 78-79.

<sup>10</sup> See the analysis of Lucian Pye and Guy Pauker in contrast to that of Samuel Huntington and Morris Janowitz. Lucian Pye, "Armies in the Process of Political Modernization," in *The Role of the Military in Underdeveloped Countries*, ed. J.J. Johnson (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), 69; Guy Pauker, "Southeast Asia as a Problem Area in the Next Decade," *World Politics*, 11, 1959; Samuel Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), 222; and Morris Janowitz, *The Military in the Political Development of New Nations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964).

military.<sup>11</sup> The debate over this question oscillated between Samuel Huntington's answer—maximizing military professionalism—and his chief antagonist from the sociological school, Morris Janowitz, who offered an essentially similar answer.<sup>12</sup> Dovetailed with the concept of separation is the position of the Structural Realist school of thinkers who “believe that the international environment in general and a nation's external threat condition in particular greatly influence domestic politics.”<sup>13</sup> Central to their analysis is that nations with high external threat conditions are more prone to military intervention in politics than those with lower external threats.

In this chapter, I will examine the arguments for each of these theoretical points of view in order to lay the groundwork for a general critique of their shortcomings prior to introducing Rebecca Schiff's theory of concordance.

## **2. Huntington's School of Separation**

In *The Soldier and the State*, Huntington describes the modern military profession in light of both theoretical and historical perspectives. Specifically, he examines the relation between the state and the officer corps. Like Samuel Finer, Huntington

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<sup>11</sup> The period 1958-1975 witnessed a net reduction in the number of democratic regimes. Samuel Huntington referred to this as the second reverse wave and documented 22 cases. See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 14-16.

<sup>12</sup> Peter D. Feaver, “The Civil-Military Problematique: Huntington, Janowitz, and the Question of Civilian Control,” *Armed Forces and Society* 23, no. 2 (winter 1996): 149.

<sup>13</sup> Schiff, “Civil-military Relations Reconsidered: A Theory of Concordance,” *Armed Forces and Society* 22, no. 1 (fall 1995): 8.

establishes the "tension" that exists between society and its military institutions: "military institutions of any society are shaped by two forces: a functional imperative stemming from the threats to the society's security and a societal imperative arising from the social forces, ideologies, and institutions dominant within the society."<sup>14</sup> To mitigate this inherent conflict, Huntington argues that the state requires an officer corps composed of professionals who view themselves as morally obligated to subordinate themselves to civilian control.<sup>15</sup>

On an intuitive level, this subordination to civilian control is not necessarily a natural occurrence in the evolution of statehood or the transition to democracy. The relationship between the state and the military is not a balance between equal entities. The underlying truth is that the ultimate repository of the threat of the use of violence resides in the hands of the officer corps rather than with the established government. As Eric Nordlinger points out, "a unified officer corps is virtually always capable of maintaining a civilian government in office, or taking control itself."<sup>16</sup> The implication, from Huntington's view, is that the officer corps must be imbued with a perspective of civil-military relations as an ethical issue and must focus on respect for civilian control as a moral obligation rather than depending solely upon legal or institutional frameworks.<sup>17</sup> This

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<sup>14</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), 2.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 78.

<sup>16</sup> Eric A. Nordlinger, *Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1977), 5.

<sup>17</sup> Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 260-264.



becomes a critical issue when the officer corps is faced with weak, corrupt, or self-serving civilian leadership. A bureaucratic, managerial, nationalistic military officer corps may decide, given such a circumstance, that intervention is in the best interest of the nation.

Given the imbalance of relative power between civilian government and the military, the only option is to minimize military power. Huntington identifies two ways to do this—both of which involve separation: “subjective” or “objective” civilian control. “Subjective” civilian control relies on legal or institutional mechanisms to reduce military power. It achieves its goal by “civilianizing the military, making them the mirror of the state.”<sup>18</sup> In this form of control, military budgets are cut, a “down-sizing” is imposed, and the military is directed to conduct a myriad of operations that would normally be civilian responsibilities.

Directly opposed to this, “objective” civilian control is less rigid and can only occur in the presence of a professional military establishment. By “militarizing the military,” objective control seeks to turn the military into “the tool of the state” by allowing the military a certain amount of autonomy in exchange for nonintervention in the political arena. Huntington observes that this type of control is only possible since the emergence of the military as a profession and that subjective control is “out of place in any society in which the division of labor has been carried to the point where there emerges a distinct class of specialists in the management of violence.”<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 80-82.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 83-85.

While Nordlinger does not approach the idea of civilian control as Huntington does, still he identifies three models of civilian control over the military: the traditional, the liberal, and the penetration model. While the traditional model falls neatly into Huntington's subjective category, the liberal model "is explicitly premised upon the differentiation of elites according to their expertise and responsibilities."<sup>20</sup> This is precisely the situation for which Huntington would prescribe subjective control. Like Huntington, Nordlinger displays a preference for the penetration model as "a powerful one for buttressing civilian control." However, the penetration model does not focus on the professionalization of the force. Rather, it seeks to reduce military power by "penetrating" it with political ideology and personnel. Nordlinger warns of the difficulty of implementing the penetration model upon an established military organization,<sup>21</sup> however, military power may be decreased by creating pressure on the institution through force reductions, implementation of social engineering, shifting emphasis on training and operations away from war fighting. In such an environment, the military might likely turn on itself or intervene in politics as it is torn by both fiscal and morale issues.

### **3. Structural Realist School**

Whereas separation theory's central focus of analysis is on domestic politics, proponents of the Structural Realist school posit that a nation's external threat condition

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<sup>20</sup> Nordlinger, 11-15.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 15-17.

and the international environment dominate domestic politics. Thus, countries that experience high external threat conditions are more prone to domestic military interventions. Likewise, a military that is active on the domestic front also has a propensity for intervention, as illustrated by Harold Lasswell's theory of the "garrison state."<sup>22</sup>

If one accepts that all state organization was originally organization for war (against external threats), then by studying historical patterns of civil-military relations, we can recognize and manage the uneasy balance between the need for security and order and the desire for individual liberty and civilian supremacy over the military. While the problem of establishing institutionalized civilian control over politicized military establishments is most acute for emerging democracies, the struggle continues following democratic consolidation. Just as democracy is not an end state but rather a process, civil-military relations are a process of change as well and thus demand periodic adjustment. The relationship of civilian leaders and the uniformed military has often been adjusted to reflect alterations in the strategic environment, the nature of warfare, domestic politics, sociocultural trends, and the capabilities and institutional values of the military and the civilian institutions that control that relationship.<sup>23</sup>

All of these arguments stress the need to mitigate the power of the military as

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<sup>22</sup> For an analysis of the "garrison state" hypothesis see Harold Lasswell, "The Garrison State Hypothesis Today," in *Changing Patterns of Military Politics*, ed. Samuel Huntington (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1962); Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979).

<sup>23</sup> For a detailed discussion of the changing nature of civil-military relations see Finer.

though that power were inherently evil. That view is shared by Harold Lasswell. He considers "the possibility that we are moving toward a world of 'garrison states'—a world in which the specialists on violence are the most powerful group in society."<sup>24</sup> He cites Auguste Comte's historical progression of states through military, feudal, and industrial phases and Herbert Spencer's military (based on force) and industrial (based on contract and free consent) ideal types. Further, he speculates that it is possible to imagine the emergence of a military state in an era of modern technology. He forecasts that the military state will emerge under the control of a new type of military officer who has become educated and experienced in civilian management skills. Ironically, in this scenario, the state may be sowing the seeds of its own destruction. This leads to the "paradox" of a militarized modern state with a military controlled by civilian style managers.<sup>25</sup> It was this blurring of traditional roles that was the harbinger of Charles Dunlap's *American Military Coup of 2012*.<sup>26</sup>

While Lasswell quotes Herbert Spencer to support his historical progression argument, historian and sociologist Otto Hintze examined Spencer's ideal types and drew a different conclusion. Hintze contended that the military and industrial ideal types are at opposite poles and that nations at times will move closer to one pole or the other

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<sup>24</sup> Harold Lasswell, "The Garrison State," *American Journal of Sociology*, (January 1941): 455.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 457-458.

<sup>26</sup> For an exploration of the potential for a military coup in the United States and how "subjective" civilian control can create the environment in which it might occur, see Charles J. Dunlap, "The Origins of the American Military Coup of 2012," *Parameters* (winter 1992-93): 2-19.

depending on the external security threat. His premise is that external forces have a greater impact on state structure than internal or social forces.<sup>27</sup> While his point of view must be considered in the context of pre World War I Europe, it is useful to consider that both internal and external forces influence the degree of military influence on state structure.

Hintze's perspective dovetails with both Huntington's and Finer's in that there are two forces interacting in civil-military relations: threats to security (external and external factors) and socially dominant forces, ideologies, and institutions (internal forces). Based on these factors a question emerges: what are the effects of periodic changes in the importance of one factor over another? In the presence of an external military threat and large military budgets, it may be easier for civilian officials and military officers to remain separate and focused on their respective areas of expertise. One of the most convincing examples of this is the case of the United States during the Second World War. Despite the unprecedented military buildup during that period, the supremacy of civilian authority over the military was never in question.<sup>28</sup> Conversely, in the subsequent apparent absence of immediate security concerns and budget cuts, both actors may find themselves in increasingly overlapping roles. Again, the United States provides an example. In contrast to the Second World War, U.S. CMR during the post-cold war era have been plagued

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<sup>27</sup> See "Military Organization and the Organization of the State," in *The Historical Essays of Otto Hintze*, ed. Felix Gilbert (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 183-193.

<sup>28</sup> Michael C. Desch, "U.S. Civil-Military Relations in a Changing International Order," in *U.S. Civil-Military Relations in Crisis or Transition?* eds. Don M. Snider and Miranda A. Carlton-Carew (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Strategic & International Studies, 1995), 171.

with problems.<sup>29</sup> The problem may be more acute for nations in the process of transitioning from authoritarian regimes to democracy. Current CMR theory—either the Huntington or Structural Realism schools—does not accept that the internal and external forces that impact a nation may lead to a civil-military relation that is to a greater or lesser degree integrated. Rather it prescribes physical and ideological separation as the only acceptable model.

## B. CRITIQUE OF SEPARATION THEORY

From Rebecca Schiff's perspective, there are two fundamental problems with the current theory of separation:

First, the current theory is derived largely from the experience of the United States, and assumes that American institutional separation should be applied to all nations to prevent domestic military intervention. It will be argued, however, that the American case is grounded in a particular historical and cultural experience—and may be inapplicable to other nations. Second, the current theory argues for the separation of civil and military institutions. In fact, institutional analysis is the theory's centerpiece. Yet this methodology fails to take into account the cultural and historical conditions that may encourage or discourage civil-military institutional separation.<sup>30</sup>

To discuss civil-military relations theory in general is to discuss American civil-military relations. While Huntington's landmark *The Soldier and the State* was not the first or only major analysis of American civil-military relations following the Second

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 173-174.

<sup>30</sup> Schiff, 7-8.

World War, it has had the greatest impact. This has been reinforced, at least in part, because the U.S. military has generally endorsed its conclusions and has used it as a primer for CMR training.<sup>31</sup>

In his introduction to *The Soldier and the State*, Huntington acknowledges how both internal and external factors have shaped American civil-military relations. Written in the context of 1957 Cold War security concerns, he notes how the nature of CMR has changed based on the unique historical and social experiences of the United States. Prior to World War II, "the primary question was: what pattern of civil-military relations is most compatible with American liberal democratic values?" In a bipolar world with a clear national security threat, the question is: "what pattern of civil-military relations will best maintain the security of the American nation?"<sup>32</sup>

By 1991, however, Huntington had moved beyond theory, and with an eye on emerging democracies, he prescribed steps to be taken to establish firm civilian control over potentially threatening military institutions abroad. Interestingly, many of these prescriptions are anything but examples of "objective civilian control."<sup>33</sup> This creates a dilemma. If Huntington's theory was developed to address American CMR transitioning

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<sup>31</sup> Feaver, 158.

<sup>32</sup> Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 3. Although the book examines the cases of Germany and Japan, it attempts to answer the question: what is the optimum CMR for the United States?

<sup>33</sup> See Huntington, *The Third Wave*, xv, 141, 149, 162, 231, 251. On page xv, Huntington states, "...at five places in the book I have abandoned the role of social scientist, assumed that of political consultant, and set forth some 'Guidelines for Democratizers.'" Guidelines include: prior to the coup, cultivate support of the generals; following the takeover, purge all potentially disloyal officers, including those who supported the return to democracy; move the military out of the capital to the frontier; and buy toys for the military to keep them content. This hardly sounds like his preferred method of objective control.

from an environment of low external security threat to one of a higher threat, while considering the incomparable historical and liberal traditions found there, is it reasonable to assume that the same theory of separation would apply to nations moving from former authoritarian regimes to more democratic ones and with vastly different historical, social, and political experiences? Huntington's prescriptions seem to acknowledge that conditions abroad merit a different approach to controlling the military than the U.S. approach. Here it would appear that Schiff has made an accurate indictment.

Undoubtedly, Huntington's vast body of work over a long period of time, combined with long-standing and broad-based acceptance of his theory, is testimony to the value of his work. However, as Peter Feaver has noted, "his theory is best considered a point of departure rather than a stopping place in the study of American civil-military relations."<sup>34</sup> More work is needed in CMR theory to account for other cases without the unique set of circumstances found in the United States. Feaver continues:

The civil-military problematique, as I have defined it, is about the delegation of responsibility from the notional civilian to the notional military. It is about increasing or decreasing the scope of delegation and monitoring the military's behavior in the context of such delegation. And it is about the military response to delegation, desire for more delegation, and even occasional usurpation of more authority than civilians intended. A serviceable theory of civilian control should address the conditions under which delegation happens and identify hypotheses about factors that shape the delegation in observable ways.<sup>35</sup>

Further, Feaver comments that the theory should transcend the concept of professionalization as this concept does little to explain the problem of civilian control.

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<sup>34</sup> Feaver, 158.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 168-169.



One additional critique is worth considering. U.S. civil-military relations have changed over time depending on any number of factors. As we have seen, theoretical treatments of CMR have not changed much during the past 40 years. However, the context in which CMR emerged has changed dramatically. In the United States, tensions between civil authority and the military have ebbed and flowed with the presence or absence of a clearly defined threat. Civilians have consciously or unconsciously vacillated between objective and subjective control techniques. Military leadership has at times adhered to the "professional" ethic or abandoned it to protect institutional prerogatives. While the nation has never endured a military coup, the nature of the relationship and the degree of civilian control has been in a constant state of flux. Current CMR theory simply does not account for this fluid dynamic.<sup>36</sup>

As the purpose of this thesis is to test a relatively new and significantly different type of CMR theory, this chapter has attempted to clearly explain the current, dominant theory, and to show that it is not universally useful. While various schools of thought have been explored, separation has emerged as the dominant prescription for the United States and all democracies. In my critique of this theory, I have shown that the theory is based on the experiences of the United States at a particular point in time. I argue that not only is it problematic to apply the U.S. model to other nations, but also that the theory does not account for variations in the civil-military relationship within the United States.

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<sup>36</sup> Paul Bracken, "Reconsidering Civil-Military Relations," *U.S. Civil-Military Relations in Crisis or Transition* eds. Don M. Snider and Miranda A. Carlton-Carew (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Strategic & International Studies, 1995), 171.

Schiff's theory of concordance appears all the more attractive since it allows for variation and accounts for the American model as well.



### III. SUMMARY OF CONCORDANCE THEORY

#### A. INTENT OF THE THEORY

Compared to Samuel Huntington's near half-century of popular acceptance, Rebecca Schiff's theory has only developed over the last five years and remains rather obscure. To date her theory of concordance has yet to be fully explored in book length and the theory has only been published in two places. Yet, she is one of few authors to offer a theory that radically challenges Huntington's assumptions rather than simply modifies his approach. It could be argued that the reason that her theory has remained unembraced is because it has not yet been fully developed and that she has only tested it against the cases of India and Israel.<sup>37</sup>

In response to Feaver's challenge in the preceding chapter, this thesis attempts to broaden the number of cases tested and to develop the theory more broadly. In this chapter, I will endeavor to articulate as clearly as possible Schiff's theory. Some of Schiff's definitions are underdeveloped and vague. Although I do not intend to interpret what she has proposed, at various junctures it may be necessary for me to make educated guesses as to what she intended. If that is the case, I will indicate where I have deviated from her published material.

Unlike current CMR theory—with focus on its western-bound, dichotomous, and

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<sup>37</sup> Schiff's theoretical work has been published in article length twice. See Rebecca L. Schiff, "The Indian Military and Nation Building: Institutional and Cultural Concordance," in *To Sheathe the Sword*, eds. John P. Lovell and David E. Albright (Westport and London: Greenwood Press, 1977), 119-130 and Rebecca L. Schiff, "Civil-military Relations Reconsidered: A Theory of Concordance," *Armed Forces and Society* 22, no. 1 (fall 1995), 401-418.

institutional nature—"the theory of concordance highlights dialogue, accommodation, and shared values or objective among the military, the political elites, and society."<sup>38</sup> Concordance theory attempts to accomplish two objectives. First, it strives to explain which institutional and cultural conditions, including separation, integration, or some alternative relation, promote or prevent domestic military intervention. This is an interesting fact, as in the past integration has at times been confused with intervention. Second, the theory predicts that when there is general agreement among the three partners, the military is less likely to intervene domestically. Although Schiff does not make the statement, it follows that when there is not agreement among the three partners, then intervention should be more likely.

The single greatest difference from current theory is that Schiff does not assume separation as the only solution—she is less prescriptive and more explanative.

Concordance theory explains the specific conditions determining the military's role in the domestic sphere that includes the government and society. Concordance does not require a particular form of government, set of institutions, or decision-making process. But it usually takes place in the context of active agreement, whether established by legislation, decree, or constitution, or based on long-standing historical and cultural values. In contrast to the prevailing theory, which emphasizes the separation of civil and military institutions, concordance encourages cooperation and involvement among the military, the political institutions, and the society at large. In other words, concordance does not assume that separate civil and military spheres are required to prevent domestic military intervention. Rather, it may be avoided if the military cooperates with the political elites and the citizenry. Cooperation and agreement on four specific indicators may result in a range of civil-military patterns including separation, the removal of civil-military boundaries, and other variations.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Schiff, "Civil-Military Relations Reconsidered," 12.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 13.

In the following two sections, I will outline Schiff's definitions of the three partners and the four indicators.

## **B. THE THREE PARTNERS**

### **1. The Military**

Schiff defines the military as "the armed forces and the personnel." She further comments that the officers and the enlisted personnel are "usually the most dedicated to the maintenance of the armed forces."<sup>40</sup> While I will not suggest modifications to Schiff's theory at this juncture, for the purposes of testing the theory, I need to clarify this definition. The military by definition includes both officers and enlisted personnel. Only a small proportion of the military establishment enters into the negotiation process with other state actors. Therefore, it is more useful to identify that part of the armed forces that interacts most closely with the other two partners, the officer corps or even more specifically the military elite.<sup>41</sup> For the purposes of this thesis, I will focus on those members (generally of flag rank) of the armed forces who interact with the other partners and who exercise leadership and policy making.

### **2. The Political Leadership**

Schiff defines the second partner—the political leadership—in terms of function. What is important is to identify who represents the government and directs influence over

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>41</sup> Schiff reinforces this view later in her discussion of the composition of the officer corps.

the composition, support, and mission of the armed forces. Schiff argues that this is more important than determining the nature of governmental institutions or the methods of leadership selection. "Thus, cabinets, presidents, prime ministers, party leaders, parliaments, and monarchies are all possible forms of government elites."<sup>42</sup> This definition represents a departure from current CMR theory that assumes civilian control within the context of a democratic system. Schiff's theory does not require a democratic form of government in order for concordance to be achieved among the three partners.

### **3. The Citizenry**

The citizenry or third partner is more diverse and also can be defined by function. A nation's citizens are a subgroup of the "civil" part of CMR. Schiff states that one must examine how citizens interact with the military and determine if there is agreement among them over the role of the military within society. Current CMR theory discounts the role of the citizenry and instead relies on political institutions as the main "civil" component of analysis. Because of this, current theory reflects only a portion of the CMR story. In contrast, concordance theory regards the citizenry as an important factor in conjunction with the military and political elites. In this manner, concordance incorporates additional elements of society that affect the role and function of the armed forces while avoiding undue focus on institutional analysis.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

### **C. THE FOUR INDICATORS**

Schiff argues that there are four indicators of concordance that illustrate the degree to which the political elite and the citizenry affect the role of the armed forces in a nation: (1) the social composition of the officer corps, (2) the political decision-making process, (3) the recruitment method, and (4) the military style. These factors do not represent a grand departure from current CMR theory. On the contrary, the first three indicators are borrowed from the current literature. The difference here is that they are considered within a wider historical and social context that "allows richer theoretical conclusions and enables better evaluation of empirical case studies."<sup>44</sup> According to Schiff, these indicators are important elements of concordance because they specifically reflect conditions that influence how much agreement or disagreement exists among the three partners. Taken within the context of historical and cultural realities, the indicators determine if the relations among the three partners will take the form of integration, separation or some other hybrid form.

#### **1. The Social Composition of the Officer Corps**

Schiff identifies the composition of the officer corps as a primary indicator of concordance. This emphasis on the professional elite of the armed forces borrows heavily from Huntington.

Most modern militaries have an officer corps that is in charge of broad institutional and day-to-day functioning of the armed forces; these are the career soldiers who dedicate their lives to soldiering and to the

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid.



development of the military and the definition of its relationship to the rest of society. The officer is distinguished from the rank-and-file soldier, and, as leaders of the armed forces, the officer corps can provide not only the critical links between the citizenry and the military but also between the military and the government.<sup>45</sup>

All modern militaries manifest a particular composition of the officer corps. Whereas in democratic societies, the officer corps usually, but not always, represents the various constituencies of the nation, broad representation is not a requisite for concordance. It is conceivable that society and the military could agree on a less representative composition.

Schiff cites the example of India during the British colonial period where the "very fact that the army was drawn from particular castes and classes sets these classes well apart" from the "mass of Indian peasantry."<sup>46</sup> Accordingly, she affirms that this example illustrates that historical and cultural traditions prevail in nations, and that those traditions can affect the agreement over the composition of the officer corps.<sup>47</sup>

## **2. The Political Decision-Making Process**

The political decision-making process, as an indicator, involves the institutional organizations of society that affect how the military operates and its satisfaction in general. According to Schiff, these factors include budget, size, materials and equipment,

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 15.

<sup>46</sup> Stephan P. Cohen, *The Indian Army* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), 50-62.

<sup>47</sup> This example is problematic in that it refers to the period when India was under colonial rule and thus was not a nation as such. However, conditions during the colonial experience most likely did have an impact on civil-military relations following the attainment of statehood.

and structure.<sup>48</sup> The political decision-making process does not suggest a particular form of government. It is valid for democratic or authoritarian systems. Instead, it refers to the specific channels that determine the needs and allocations of the military.<sup>49</sup>

As an example, Schiff states:

...budgets, materials, size, and structure are issues decided upon by open parliaments, closed cabinets, special committees, and political elites, and may involve the participation of military officers. Often the military makes its need known through a governmental channel or agency that takes into consideration both military and societal resources and requirements. In many countries there is a close partnership—or, in some cases, collusion—between the military and industry that is known as the ‘military industrial complex.’ Such a partnership may have the support of the citizenry, which may be persuaded that external threat conditions facing a nation warrant a close military and industrial relationship. The domestic economy may also play a role as the business sector and the citizens stand to gain from the creation of new industry and employment.<sup>50</sup>

What is critical is that agreement be reached by the three partners over the political process that best meets the requirements of the armed forces.<sup>51</sup>

### **3. The Recruitment Method**

The third indicator of concordance is the recruitment method of the armed forces,

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<sup>48</sup> This may be too narrow a list. Other factors may include: the degree of autonomy given to the military to advise on defense or security issues; the quality of life issues like pay, housing, entitlements, and pensions; and the degree to which the military is used as an instrument of social change. There are any number of contentious issues that could fall under this rubric.

<sup>49</sup> Schiff, “Civil-Military Relations Reconsidered,” 15.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 15-16.

<sup>51</sup> While I understand that Schiff’s intent is to prevent military intervention by meeting the needs of the armed forces, I believe that if there is really to be a partnership then the idea should be to reach agreement among the three partners over the process that best meets the requirements of the nation.

which refers to the enlistment of citizens into the military. Recruitment may be either coercive or persuasive.<sup>52</sup> Under a system of coercive recruitment, men and supplies are forcibly obtained while demands are made upon the citizenry, through taxation and conscription, to provide for the needs and obligations of the military. Because such demands are often harsh and citizens are forced to cooperate against their will, this form of recruitment does not normally allow for concordance between the military and the citizenry.

Persuasive recruitment is based on the belief, among the citizenry, that the sacrifice of military service is needed for the sake of security, patriotism, or any other national cause. Enlistment in the armed forces may be either voluntary or involuntary. In this form, the government does not need to coerce the population into military service when they "willingly offer themselves" by volunteering or accepting the need for enlistment.<sup>53</sup> Persuasive recruitment occurs when the three partners reach agreement or concordance over the requirements and composition of the armed forces.

#### 4. The Military Style

The final indicator of concordance is military style. This factor represents an original aspect of Schiff's theory. It is also the most difficult to articulate. Military style refers to a complex mix of what the armed forces look like, what people think about them,

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<sup>52</sup> Schiff draws these forms exclusively from Samuel Finer's, "extraction-coercion-persuasion cycle," in "State and Nation-Building In Europe: The Role of the Military," *The Formation of National States in Western Europe*, ed. Charles Tilly (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 96-98.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

and what guiding beliefs drive them. Schiff explains why this indicator is so important:

Style is about the drawing of social boundaries or their elimination. It is the mode by which members of particular elites associate with each other as peers and differentiate themselves from the members of other elites and the members of non elite groups. It is important because it reflects how something appears; and appearance stands as a symbol that can, by the nature and force it conveys, connote a type of power and authority. Military style deals directly with the human and cultural elements of the armed forces. How the military looks, the overt and subtle signals it conveys, the rituals it displays—these are all part of a deep and nuanced relationship among soldiers, citizens, and the polity.<sup>54</sup>

One may well ask: so what? Schiff has hit upon a variable that is at the same time almost intangible and yet so much a part of militaries everywhere—how symbolism and ritual pervade the relationship of the military to other sectors of society. These symbols and rituals form part of the history and culture of the nation; they bestow upon the military a sense of respectability, professionalism, separateness, and cohesiveness. They affect the nature of the officer corps, the methods of induction into the military, and the institutional processes that determine the needs and requirements of the armed forces.

Having described Schiff's four indicators, a series of questions present themselves. How do the four indicators work together? How much agreement or disagreement is required to prevent military intervention or precipitate a coup? How do we know if concordance has been achieved?

Schiff's work to date does not adequately address these questions. However, she never states that there must be absolute agreement among the "three partners" in order to have concordance. Rather, she indicates that the greater the degree of discordance that

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<sup>54</sup> Schiff, "Civil-Military Relations Reconsidered," 17.

exists, the greater the likelihood that the military will attempt a coup. Added to this is the very problematic issue of attempting to measure or quantify something as intangible as agreement or disagreement in the minds of the "three partners." The best that we can hope for is to look for conditions that will illustrate that such relationships exist. For the purposes of my analysis, I propose that evidence of disagreement between any two of the "three partners," with respect to any of the four indicators, is sufficient but not necessary to create a coup attempt. Further, as the disagreement expands to other indicators, the risk of intervention should increase. That risk would increase further still if both the military and the citizenry disagreed with the political leadership as the military may view such support as justification for intervention. None of these propositions is clearly identified by Schiff. However, they seem to have intuitive merit and certainly do not run counter to her hypotheses.

In the chapters that follow, I will analyze the case of Argentina to determine whether concordance theory can account for the instances of military intervention as well as the absence of military coups following the subsequent returns to democracy.

#### **IV. THE HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT OF CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS IN ARGENTINA**

At the heart of concordance theory, is the idea that a nation's historical and cultural experience conditions the degree to which civil-military relations manifest more separate or integrated forms. Recent international events illustrate that ethnic orientations, nationalism, and multicultural diversity are root causes of domestic unrest found throughout the world. Concordance theory (a) seeks to operationalize the cultural and institutional indicators previously discussed; and (b) explains the conditions under which the three partners can agree on and thus prevent domestic military intervention.

As I have discussed earlier, current CMR theory is based on the unique historical and cultural experience of the United States. Further, the nature of U.S. CMR has changed over the years as a result of both internal and external circumstances. This chapter will briefly analyze the unique historical and cultural experience of Argentina in an effort to illustrate how it is different from that of the United States. Since it is beyond the scope of this thesis to fully evaluate the entire histories of both nations, I will limit my discussion first, to the distinct differences between the United States and Latin America in general, and second, to the issue of bureaucratic authoritarianism in the cases of Argentina.

While both the United States and Argentina are located in the New World, were former colonies of European powers, and have all evolved into what are generally accepted as democracies, the nature of those experiences have been significantly different.

Additionally, if Schiff's theory is universally applicable, then each may have developed a civil-military relationship that is more or less integrated or separated depending on their degree of agreement among the "three partners" with respect to the four indicators of concordance. Simply put, a model of CMR developed to explain the civil-military situation in the United States may not be a suitable model for other nations.

#### **A. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN NORTH AND LATIN AMERICA**

While it is by definition true that each Latin American nation is unique, it is equally true that generalizations can be drawn based upon a common Iberian heritage that sets them apart from their North American counterparts. As Carlos Fuentes says, "the three-thousand-mile border between Mexico and the United States is more than a border between Mexico and the United States: it is the border between the United States and all Latin America, for Latin America begins at the Mexican Border."<sup>55</sup> As one of the foremost and most prolific of writers on Latin American heritage, Fuentes makes a strong argument for the differences in the historical, cultural, and social experiences and realities between the United States and Latin America.

In his published lecture *Latin America at War with the Past*, Fuentes suggests that we should try to bridge our differences while at the same time not deny that they exist. This point goes the heart of Schiff's contention that current CMR theory attempt to impose an essentially ethnocentric view of civil-military relations upon nations with

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<sup>55</sup> Carlos Fuentes, *Latin America at War with the Past*, (Montreal, Toronto, New York, London: CBC Enterprises, 1985), 7.

distinctly different backgrounds and conditions. Further, while he does not address CMR issues directly, he explains why it is in the nature of North Americans to assume the bias that others would be well served to follow their example. The problem is that the development of the United States and Latin American countries has followed different paths.

In the first part of his lecture, Fuentes makes a series of opposing statements which serve to highlight the broad gulf that separates the United States from Latin America:

It is the only frontier between the industrialized and the developing worlds. It is the frontier between two memories: a memory of triumph and a memory of loss...It is the frontier between two cultures: the Protestant, capitalist, Nordic culture, and the southern, Indo-Mediterranean, Catholic culture of syncretism and the baroque.<sup>56</sup>

Traditions at the time of founding have also led to different structures. The United States "was born in perfect consonance with the values of modernity: the wedlock of religion and economics; free enterprise; free inquiry; self-government; skepticism; criticism; division of powers, checks and balances; federalism. Conversely, Latin America was born of conditions in discord with these same values: the refusal of modernity; royal absolutism; dogmatism; the Holy Inquisition; prolongation of the Holy Roman order; the divorce between the religious man and the economic man; rigid ecclesiastical societies; centralism."<sup>57</sup>

Like Fuentes, Claudio Véliz also sees the effects of the continuity of tradition on

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 10-11.



the development of Latin America. In his work *The Centralist Tradition of Latin America*, Véliz offers that scholars and statesmen alike are disillusioned and perplexed by attempts to reform, modernize, revolutionize, or transform the nations of Latin America. He attributes this to the misguided notion of the applicability of Northern experiences and models to conditions in the South.

I am convinced that this is a result of the mistaken belief that the experience of the industrialized countries of northwestern Europe and the interpretive models derived from it are precisely applicable to the peoples of the southern regions of the New World. I am also convinced that the proliferation of authoritarian regimes during the last few years is not an aberration of moral and political taste, but a manifestation of a style of political behavior, a secular disposition of Latin American Society that under different forms—of which the military may well prove the most transient—will be with us for some time yet. The main hypothesis presented in this work affords a basis for these assertions. This hypothesis is founded on the description and analysis of the principal factors that distinguish the social, economic, and political character of Latin American Society from that of the countries that share in the northwestern European tradition. These factors have had a decisive influence on the genesis and formation of Latin American society: they are also of contemporary importance and will, I believe, continue to be of major significance in the future.<sup>58</sup>

Véliz cites four factors that are inversely related to the “centralist” character of Latin American social and political arrangements: (1) the absence of the feudal experience from the Latin American tradition; (2) the absence of religious nonconformity and the resulting latitudinarian centralism of the dominant religion; (3) the absence of any occurrence or circumstance over time that could conceivably be taken as the counterpart of the European Industrial Revolution; (4) the absence of those ideological, social, and political

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<sup>58</sup> Claudio Véliz, *The Centralist Tradition of Latin America*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 3.

developments associated with the French Revolution that so dramatically transformed the character of western European society during the past century and a half.<sup>59</sup>

Throughout the remainder of the book, Véliz describes how the centralist tradition has become manifested in the current day: the appearance of authoritarian regimes, capital cities as the centers of power, weak political party systems, and disproportionately strong presidents. While he acknowledges the difficulty in making broad generalizations, he states, "this should not obscure the fact that they have much in common that is of definitive importance in the construction of their present and their future."<sup>60</sup>

While it may be true that culture is not a deterministic factor, it is certainly true that a nation's history and cultural experiences must condition how they interpret the world around them and impact the nature and form of the institutions they develop. Likewise, it is reasonable to acknowledge that a theory of CMR, based on the conditions and experiences of the United States may not provide the only possible model for the nations of Latin America to emulate.

## **B. THE PROBLEM OF BUREAUCRATIC AUTHORITARIANISM IN ARGENTINA**

The case that I have elected to evaluate, Argentina, is considered to be a prototypical example of the bureaucratic authoritarian type of political system. For that reason, it seems obligatory to address the issues raised by it. For Argentine political

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 3-4.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 15.

scientist Guillermo O'Donnell, bureaucratic authoritarianism emerged (BA) emerged as a response to the crisis of populism that came to dominate the politics of Argentina under Juan Perón (1946-1955) and of Brazil during the presidency of Getúlio Vargas (1930-1945 and 1950-54). At the end of the so-called easy stage of import substitution industrialization (ISI), having reached the limits of the domestic market, populism confronted serious problems. Rising inflation and balance of payment difficulties undermined the economic gains made by the urban middle and working classes and hence eroded the viability of the populist coalitions on which these regimes were based.<sup>61</sup>

According to O'Donnell, due to the recent period of modernization, technocrats emerged from the military, state, and private sector. These technocrats sought to attain a dominant position within the coalition. This new group of elites attributed the crisis to the threat of political activation within the popular groups and technocrats in both Brazil and Argentina encouraged and supported military coups. The new regimes moved to exclude and deactivate the popular sectors by instituting authoritarian repression and reorienting the economy according to technocratic conceptions of economic growth.<sup>62</sup>

O'Donnell sees weakness in making legitimate a nation that relies on transnational capital while excluding popular sectors from political participation. He states that it is the fear of the threat of lower-class mobilization during populism that creates the environment in which an alliance may be formed between the upper bourgeoisie, the technocrats, the

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<sup>61</sup> Peter F. Klaren and Thomas J. Bossert, *Promise of Development: Theories of Change in Latin America* (Boulder, CO and London: Westview Press, 1986). 237-238.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

suppliers of transnational capital, and the military. However, he envisions this alliance as basically unstable and suggests a variety of alternatives including forms of limited democracy.<sup>63</sup>

Although this aspect of Argentine history will be analyzed in greater detail in the next two chapters, it should be said here that Schiff's theory of concordance may account for the occurrence of the coups that occurred in that country. It is very possible that the reason that the coups transpired is that there was not general agreement among the three partners with respect to at least two of the indicators Schiff has identified, specifically, "the composition of the officer corps" and "the political decision-making process." In both cases it is probable that the military desired to enhance the number of technocratic members of the officer corps and that a populist based regime was opposed to this. It is also likely, that following the easy phase of ISI, that the military was not receiving the funding for modernization that they felt was required. While this represents only a cursory look at the issue, I would argue that concordance theory is not necessarily negated by the emergence of bureaucratic authoritarian regimes in my test case. Additionally, the admission by O'Donnell that these regimes were inherently unstable tends to suggest that once concordance is reestablished, the return of a less interventionist military is likely.

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid.



## **V. EVALUATION OF CONCORDANCE THEORY IN ARGENTINA**

### **A. FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATION**

For the purposes of evaluating Rebecca Schiff's theory of concordance in the case of Argentina, I propose to examine two different time frames: the period of military coups prior to the return to democracy in 1983 and the period since Argentina has joined Huntington's "third wave" of democratization (1983 to present). If concordance theory is valid and predictive, then one would expect to find that, during this period of coups, there was general disagreement, or discordance, between the "three partners"—the military, the political elite, and the citizenry—with respect to the four indicators—composition of the officer corps, political decision-making process, recruitment method, and military style. Further, one would expect to find that it was this discordance that led to multiple military interventions. Likewise, following the return to democracy in 1983, one should find that concordance had been reached and has been maintained among the "three partners" and has to date prevented further military intervention despite a legacy of periodic military takeovers.

That being said, there is little direct data that specifically addresses Schiff's four indicators. However, it is possible to derive from anecdotal evidence and various political and social data what the degree of agreement may have been and currently is between the "three partners."

Since Schiff contends that historical experience is important to concordance theory, it seems appropriate to look at the five decades leading up to Argentina's return to

apparently lasting democracy. It is almost a paradox that a country as wealthy, urbanized, literate and in most respects developed as Argentina should have suffered military administration for so much of its recent history. Military intervention over the decades has been the rule rather than the exception, as Deborah L. Norden points out:

To the casual observer, military coups and rebellions appear to be discreet events. Coups explode on the political horizon with a drama that contrasts starkly with the usual subtleties and intricacies of political change. Yet the drama is deceptive. Military coups come from a complex series of conditions and organizational maneuvers. In Argentina, they are also part and product of a pattern of chronic interventionism, unique among the more advanced countries of South America. Argentina's military interventionism stems from both a civilian predilection to seek military allies and the military's tendency to respond.<sup>64</sup>

George Philip has commented on the same phenomenon.

Yet it would be quite wrong to see the country as suffering under a military jackboot from which it longed to break free. Quite the contrary; military regimes in Argentina have never governed, and have rarely sought to govern, without substantial social support. Military desire to avoid complete isolation, which played a decisive part in the decision to call elections after the Falklands defeat, has been no less consistent a feature of its political role as has its constant assumption of government. Where the military has ruled, it has done so with the support of civilian allies (and not always the same civilian allies); indeed, so common has been the sight of civilians calling for military intervention that Argentines have a phrase to describe it: 'knocking at the doors of the barracks'.<sup>65</sup>

Both Norden's and Philip's propositions support my contention about concordance theory from Chapter III, which holds that military intervention is more likely if the military and the citizenry both disagree with the third "partner," political leadership.

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<sup>64</sup> Deborah L. Norden, *Military Rebellion in Argentina: Between Coups and Consolidation* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1996) 157.

<sup>65</sup> George Philip, "The Fall of the Argentine Military," *Third World Quarterly* 6, no. 3 (July 1984): 624.

## B. THE ERA OF MILITARY COUPS 1930-1983

After overthrowing the government in 1930, the military governed (either directly or indirectly) for the next fifteen years in alliance with civilian conservatives, under a fraudulent yet formally democratic system. In 1943, the civilian government was about to declare war on Germany. The officer corps divided under pressure from the United States and widespread institutional loyalty to the Nazis. Axis sympathizers within the armed forces staged a coup. Within this vacuum, Colonel Juan Perón built a base within organized labor for the political opening which was becoming inevitable. Once democratic elections were held in 1946, Peron won the presidency. He was reelected in 1951 but overthrown in 1955 by an officer corps concerned with his tendency toward personalistic autocracy. For the next decade their efforts were focused on preventing his return from exile. During this period the military found support in the older, displaced political parties that now wanted their chance to govern. Between 1955 and 1966 there were two military *interregna* and two periods of presidential rule by different factions of the Radical Party. Argentine political society was split into Peronist and anti-Peronist factions.<sup>66</sup>

In 1966, General Juan Carlos Onganía seized power from Arturo Illia, in the fifth coup in Argentina since 1930. The previous four interventions had followed what Alfred Stepan refers to as the "moderator pattern." With the encouragement of civilian elites, the military would stage a coup in order to relieve what they considered a crisis situation and always with the understanding between civilian and military elites that the military would

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 625.



relinquish control of the government to a civilian administration after a short interval. This time things were quite different.<sup>67</sup>

The Onganía regime seized power with no intention of returning to civilian rule for a ten to fifteen year period. On this occasion, the military had an agenda other than providing stability until a civilian government could retake the reins of power. Rather, their intent was to reshape Argentine society through a three-phased plan of economic, social, and political change. The serious nature of the transformation envisioned by the military regime was illustrated by the name given to it, "The Argentine Revolution".<sup>68</sup>

However, the coup did follow one form from those of the past. This time the armed forces enjoyed broad-based public support. The previous Illia administration had entered office with no mandate and only 25 percent of the vote. Rather than attempting to broaden his base of support, he narrowed it with economic policies that discouraged agricultural investment and with political strategies aimed at dividing and co-opting organized labor.<sup>69</sup> A survey taken within a week of the June 1966 coup showed that a full 66 percent of the population was satisfied with the change in government. Yet another survey indicated that over 77 percent thought that the coup was necessary. Within two years, 70 percent of those surveyed considered the Onganía regime to be equally bad or

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<sup>67</sup> María José Moyano, *Argentina's Lost Patrol: Armed Struggle, 1969-1979* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), 16.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> David Pion-Berlin, *Through the Corridors of Power: Institutions and Civil-Military Relations in Argentina* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), 52.

worse than the prior Illia administration.<sup>70</sup>

This disillusionment eventually revealed itself in the radicalization of society and armed struggle. However, this was not a result of Onganía's economic plan and the painful results of import substitution industrialization (ISI). Rather, radicalization had political causes. Bureaucratic-authoritarianism, in the 1966 Argentine context, was characterized by a relatively low level of threat prior to the coup. This led to a consequently low level of state repression.<sup>71</sup> The Onganía regime was known as a *dictablanda*, or benign dictatorship. What was not benign, however, was Onganía's genuine belief in his duty to reshape society and "remoralize" his country. Besides banning political activity and parties and instituting severe economic policies, Onganía's regime became a moral campaign with conservative religious overtones. Books were burned, "red light" districts were closed down, and the country was entrusted into the care of the Virgin Mary. The military staged several attacks on the nation's universities. This was counter to the prevailing cultural attitude in Argentina and contributed to the commencement of armed struggle by various organizations.<sup>72</sup>

Throughout this period, the military managed to avoid some accountability for the economic problems that the nation endured. Onganía limited to a large degree the military's political participation. In many respects the Onganía regime followed the

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<sup>70</sup> Moyano, 16-17.

<sup>71</sup> Guillermo O'Donnell, "State and Alliances in Argentina, 1956-1976," *Journal of Development Studies* 15, no. 1 (1978): 3-34.

<sup>72</sup> Moyano, 18-21.

personalistic pattern of other Argentine heads of state more so than that of a military dictator. Throughout the 1966-73 period, civilians continued to dominate the administrative structure of government. In cabinet posts, the military never surpassed 25 percent and the number of military officers in the top strata of the government hovered near 11 percent of all positions. Therefore, actual military participation remained low enough to prevent stigmatization by the regime's failures.<sup>73</sup>

During the Onganía regime the military became more unified, largely due to government moderation in incorporating officers into political and administrative positions. In contrast, under the administration of General Alejandro Lanusse, that fragile unity began to deteriorate. Lanusse, an army cavalry officer like Onganía, inspired dissent from two sectors within the military: the nationalist and the more apolitical professionalist. Most active in resisting the Lanusse regime were a group of pro-Perón, nationalist colonels who were caught organizing a coup in 1971. That same year there were nationalist uprisings in the military garrisons of Azul and Olavarría. Other sectors opposed Lanusse from a professionalist perspective, on grounds that the general had become too politicized. His political behavior included the excessive favoring of personal allies and members of his cavalry branch of the army and his pursuance of political goals.<sup>74</sup>

In Spite of this, organized opposition within the military was negligible. There was general agreement that the military regime must continue in order to allow for the "recuperation of constitutional normality." Whatever internal antagonisms existed were

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<sup>73</sup> Norden, 40-41.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 41.

overridden by a shared perception of anti-Peronism, fear of communism and the increase in guerrilla activities through the 1960's and 1970's. The fear of guerrilla violence was stronger than the fear of Peronism. Peronism was no longer viewed as the most dangerous alternative to the military government and Peronists began to be viewed as potential allies in the "war" against the guerrilla groups.<sup>75</sup>

Lanusse faced a state of general unrest. Strikes increased in response to a continued steep rise in the cost of living, and there were many kidnappings for ransom, as well as murders by both the Peronist guerrillas known as the *Montoneros* and Marxist groups such as the Peoples Revolutionary Army (ERP). Still, elections were scheduled for March 1973, and, in preparation, bans on political parties and activities were lifted in April 1971.<sup>76</sup> The Peronists enjoyed a resurgence of popularity, particularly among the urban working class, women, youth, and the rural middle sectors.<sup>77</sup> It rapidly became evident to the Lanusse regime that efforts to demystify Perón had been in vain. Still the regime sought to impose conditions on the transition.<sup>78</sup>

The most significant of the limitations on the new government did not come from the Lanusse administration but from the military hierarchy as a whole. In a document known as *Los Cinco Puntos* (The Five Points), signed by all active duty generals, military

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 41-42.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 43-45.

<sup>77</sup> Moyano, 32.

<sup>78</sup> Norden, 44.

leaders specified their demands for the incoming government. Included in their list was the requirement to comply with the constitution, laws, and "republican institutions." The government warned against the granting of amnesty to suspects and convicts associated with the guerrilla groups. Further, it advised the new government against a reinstitution of the Peronistic tendencies of the past and called for continuing the fight against subversives. Finally, the document demanded that the military hierarchy not be altered.<sup>79</sup> Still, the transition appears to be a pacted one, with the military having a somewhat disproportionate say in the nature of the change in government.<sup>80</sup> The Five Points were almost immediately challenged by the new regime.

The Peronist coalition nominated Héctor J. Cámpora as a stand-in for Perón who was still in exile. Elections, held under a new law that strengthened the presidency, took place on March 11, 1973. Cámpora won the election with 49 percent of the vote. Along with that success, Peronists gained 11 of 22 governorships and 60 percent of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies. In June 1973, Perón returned to Argentina and Cámpora resigned to make way for his idol to rule directly. Had he not resigned, the military would likely have deposed him. In elections held in September 1973, Perón won with a clear majority. His wife, María Estela Martínez de Perón (Isabelita) was elected vice-president.

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 44-45.

<sup>80</sup> The term "pacted transition" was coined by Philippe Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl in a paper entitled "What Kind of Democracies Are Emerging in South America, Central America, Southern Europe and Eastern Europe?" presented at an international colloquium, Transitions to Democracy in Europe and Latin America, 21-25 January 1991, University of Guadalajara and FLACSO, Mexico. The term refers to the deal or agreement struck between elites to form a new government.

Continued unrest and political violence led Perón to begin to favor the political Right.<sup>81</sup>

If the military had been initially apprehensive about leftist support for Perón, the newly elected president was quick to display his opportunism by appealing to the institution that would most likely cut short his return to power—the military. During his first two terms in office, Perón had presided over a large military buildup, faster promotions, and a significant increase in the military-controlled defense industry. He had attempted to open the officer corps to new entrants and had tried to impose Peronist doctrine within the ranks. Through careful personnel changes, he sought to create a military establishment personally loyal to himself.<sup>82</sup> Other Perón policies were more subtle and symbolic.

After 1973, besides the requisite laudatory speeches aimed at the military, Perón made an effort to elevate the prestige of the armed forces as well. Following his readmission to the Army, he wore his uniform for his first public reappearance as an indication of his respect and pride in the Argentine military. Since symbolism and prestige have frequently tended to be more important to the armed forces than concrete benefits, a theme that would be again demonstrated in the post-1983 period, such actions significantly enhanced Perón's standing with the military.<sup>83</sup>

Perón's manipulation of the military was not, however, limited to symbolic

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 46-47.

<sup>82</sup> Robert A. Potash, *The Army and Politics in Argentina*, vol. 2: 1945-1962 (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1980), 107-118.

<sup>83</sup> Norden, 48-49.

gestures. He once again renewed his efforts at de-politicization of the officer corps. His attempts to secure control of the military through the promotion system provoked the resignation of all three service chiefs and decimated the army and navy high commands. A former opponent and head of military intelligence was forced into resignation. Even the army commander in chief, General Jorge Carcagno, was removed due to the president's fear of his popularity. Perón's efforts to establish "subjective" control over the military were short-lived as he died within a year of his return to the presidency of Argentina.<sup>84</sup>

Isabel Perón's rise to the presidency marked the denouement of the Perón era. Faced with problems that only worsened following the death of her husband, her administration sank into ineffectiveness and inaction. It was only a matter of time before another coup would be greeted by many with a sense of collective relief.<sup>85</sup> Isabel Perón was even more inclined to appoint military leaders on the basis of their political sentiments. Army chief of staff General Elbio Anaya was replaced by General Mema Laplane, a supporter of "integrated professionalism," a doctrine that commits the military institution to the government's political views. Under intense pressure from all three branches of the armed forces, the president was eventually forced to call for his resignation and replace him with General Jorge Videla, a more traditional professionalist.<sup>86</sup>

The coup d'état that brought down Isabel Perón in 1976, differed in pattern from

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<sup>84</sup> Paul W. Zagorski, "Civil-Military Relations and Argentine Democracy," *Armed Forces and Society* 14, no. 3 (spring 1988): 419.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Norden, 49-50.

previous military takeovers. First, the coup was a carefully calculated affair and included all of the armed forces. A committee of representatives from all three services met for months prior to the coup to draft the political plan of the *Proceso de Reorganización Nacional* (Process of National Reorganization). Second, the new military government was a junta comprised of senior officers from the army, navy, and air force. This stood in contrast to the personalistic style and more politically motivated general-presidents of the past. Finally, the military coup of 1976 was the most "professionalist" case of military intervention in Argentine history. The leaders of the coup were clearly from the political mainstream of the military hierarchy rather than from the extreme Right or Left. They were apparently reluctant to instate military rule despite support from various members of the political community. A coalition was only consolidated after members of the military were thwarted in their attempts to provoke impeachment proceedings against Isabel Perón's administration.<sup>87</sup>

This apparent unanimity of vision and purpose was to be short-lived. By the early 1980s, the problems that faced the several military governments that followed Isabel Perón's regime were almost insurmountable. The threat of terrorism had been largely defeated, but only at an inordinately high cost of widespread human-rights abuses that led to significant public protest. In 1981 the economy was in recession and by 1982 witnessed a negative growth rate of 6 percent of Gross Domestic Product. The nation, which had run up extensive debt in the 1970s, faced even greater economic pressure as the loans fell

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<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 50-53.



due in the 1980s. All of these calamities were faced by military officers ill-equipped to address them.<sup>88</sup>

Within the military itself, significant rifts had developed. Following four years of military government, the new military president, General Roberto Viola, was himself overthrown and succeeded by the maneuver's organizer and then army chief of staff, General Leopoldo Galtieri. The new president apparently harbored ambitions of continuing in the office of the president following a transition to civilian rule and was unable to control the other service chiefs or dominate the armed forces altogether. Thus, military factionalism became more intense during this period.<sup>89</sup>

Military adventure provided the Galtieri administration with an option to dealing with serious domestic issues, and in the absence of an internal threat, he focused the military and the nation on external issues. We now know that the Argentine military had already decided upon a policy of increased international belligerence at the time of the Galtieri takeover. To a certain degree, it was largely a matter of chance that the Falklands/Malvinas islands would be their first target.

By the end of March 1982, the Galtieri regime had become increasingly bellicose with Chile over the long-lasting Beagle Channel dispute. Argentina had semiofficially, despite sharp diplomatic protest, laid claim to half of Paraguay. In an attempt to garner favor, the administration publicly offered proxy troops to help the United States in Central America. Galtieri apparently thought that a strong pro-United States stand on other

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<sup>88</sup> Zagorski, 421.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

matters would be sufficient to protect his regime from reaction to a Falklands/Malvinas seizure. He was later quoted by journalists as saying that he considered himself "the spoilt child of the Americans."<sup>90</sup>

For a military establishment that had for the last half century focused on internal security threats and dabbled at political leadership, the reality of war against the militarily sophisticated British was a rude awakening. Nationalist fervor was short-lived as promises of national triumph turned into evidence of disaster. On 14 June 1982, General Mario Menéndez surrendered at Port Stanley, just 74 days following the seizure of the islands by the Argentines. The military defeat completely discredited the regime and, this time, the armed forces were stigmatized by the failure of the military government. The regime fell into turmoil and elections originally planned for January 1984 were brought forward to October 1983. In order to protect the institution, the armed forces held the elections hostage long enough to allow for convalescence and to pre-empt civilian demands for vengeance. It was a period of self-preservation.<sup>91</sup>

### **C. FOLLOWING THE RETURN TO DEMOCRACY 1983**

In the aftermath of the war, Galtieri and the three service commanders were forced to resign and a retired General was appointed as a caretaker president. Now concerned about the possibility of prosecutions of military officers as a result of the "dirty war" against the guerrillas during the 1970s and the early 1980s, the armed forces attempted to

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<sup>90</sup> Philip, 630-631.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 631-632.

pass a self-amnesty law, only to see it later rescinded. Although there was some pressure from within the ranks of the military to perpetuate the military regime, elections were held and a new civilian government assumed power in December 1983.<sup>92</sup>

Amid the turmoil a non-Peronist candidate for president emerged. Although a member of the Radical Party, Raúl Alfonsín was not a mainstream member. The vote in October 1983 was a vote for the man rather than for the party. He had led a splinter group of party members against the position of the cautious and conciliatory relationship with the former military junta. He had openly opposed the military tactics employed during the "dirty war" and was one of very few prominent leaders to condemn his country's invasion of the Falklands/Malvinas when it took place. This political stance made him the party favorite in the post war election period.<sup>93</sup>

As the newly elected president, Raúl Alfonsín had distinct advantages over previous civilian presidents. The new administration found itself able to rely on a general willingness among almost all sectors of society to give it an opportunity to prove itself. The military lacked the cohesion and morale to threaten the government in the short term. Alfonsín had won a majority of the vote in an open presidential contest, the first time a Peronist presidential candidate had been defeated in an election. Therefore, Alfonsín was neither hostage to the Peronists nor the anti-Peronist military.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Zagorski, 422.

<sup>93</sup> Philip, 632.

<sup>94</sup> Zagorski, 422-423.

Alfonsín's strategy for dealing with the military was two-pronged: to punish those guilty of serious human rights violations and to reform the structure of the armed forces. In this manner, Alfonsín distinguished between the military as a valuable institution in need of reform and the specific officers who had committed serious crimes, and argued that the prosecution of the guilty officers was not intended to impugn the dignity of the armed forces as an institution.<sup>95</sup> He essentially expected the military to cooperate with him because, in the long-term, he had their best interests at heart.

Alfonsín pursued a strategy of gradual doctrinal change, while avoiding politicization and wholesale restructuring. He attempted to develop a new role for the military based on a nonpolitical version of professionalism. This new role rejected the military's prior vision of national security doctrine that was focused on internal threats to the polity and embraced the traditional Western concept of defense against foreign threats. Despite opposition from the chiefs of staff of the armed forces, a new defense law was passed in October 1986. The act officially relegated internal security to a civilian police function.<sup>96</sup>

Key to Alfonsín's strategy for the professionalization of the military was the de-linking of the military or military factions from their allied civilian cliques. This is a crucial issue since, as we have seen, the military is most likely to intervene with the tacit or explicit consent and encouragement of civilian sectors. In a 1985 Armed Forces Day

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 423

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

speech, Alfonsín identified the duplicity shared by both groups in the promotion of coups.

The coups have always been civilian-military in character. The undoubted military responsibility for their operational aspects should not make us forget the heavy responsibility of the civilians who plotted them and gave them ideological basis. The coups always reflected the loss of the sense of legality inherent in society, not just the loss of the sense of legality in the military.<sup>97</sup>

Statements like these became a persistent theme in Alfonsín's relations with the armed forces.

Alfonsín was never able to wrap up his proposed exchange of technical modernization of the armed forces for prosecution of human rights violators and subordination to civilian authority. The most important roadblock was military opposition to human rights trials. One thousand officers were suspected of human rights violations. Trials, therefore, represented a serious challenge to the armed forces as an institution. More importantly, in terms of military style, such trials struck at the heart of the military's self-image as protector of the nation. Rather than cooperate with the president, the armed forces defended their actions in the "dirty war" as a justified response to forces that threatened the survival of the country. While the military demanded immunity, military courts refused to prosecute.<sup>98</sup>

Alfonsín's attempt to separate those guilty of human rights violations and the rest of the armed forces blew up in his face. Rather than isolating a group of guilty senior

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<sup>97</sup> Zagorski, 423.

<sup>98</sup> Paul W. Zagorski, "Civil-Military Relations and Argentine Democracy: The Armed Forces under the Menem Government," *Armed Forces and Society* 20, no. 3 (spring 1994): 424-425.

officers and ex-officers, his newly appointed high command became isolated from the junior officer corps. While the high command was willing to accept the rights trials and at least did not oppose military restructuring, middle-level and lower-level officers grew intolerant of what they viewed as a government psychological campaign against the armed forces and of the high command's inaction and lack of leadership regarding the issue of trials.<sup>99</sup>

This rift within the military led to three military revolts in April 1987, December 1987, and in December 1988. In each of these rebellions, lieutenant colonels and colonels led mutinies and demanded government concessions including the cessation of rights trials, pardons for those officers already convicted, and the appointment of a new high command sympathetic to the views of the rebels. While publicly the government proved able to face down the mutineers, the rebels were able to stop further trials and secured a shakeup of the top command structures.<sup>100</sup>

While the legacy of the Alfonsín government had been a political-military stalemate, his successor, Carlos Menem, who assumed power in July 1989, sought to avoid the fate that had befallen Alfonsín. Menem moved quickly to pardon the military mutineers. This act only heightened the perception of civilian vulnerability to military provocation. However, from the perspective of the armed forces, the pardons capped off a successful drive by elements within the military to end what they saw as a campaign of

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 425.

<sup>100</sup> Paul W. Zagorski, *Democracy versus National Security: Civil-Military Relations in Latin America* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992), 100-112.

judicial persecution waged against them. It also illustrated that civilian strategies of confrontation with the military would not work. Menem used the appointments of Italo Luder and Humberto Romero, his first two ministers of defense who enjoyed close ties to the armed forces, to signal his desire for a more amicable relationship with the military. At the same time, however, the military was subjected to one of the steepest budget cuts in Argentine history.<sup>101</sup>

During the first four years of the Menem presidency defense budgets either declined or remained stagnant. Even after an economic recovery in 1991, defense spending lagged behind the nation's general growth rate for goods and services. Requests of the armed forces lost out to other claims on public-sector finances. Unlike Alfonsín, Menem did not attempt to punish the armed forces politically. Rather, he insisted that they not interfere with the nation's larger macro-economic objectives. Simply put, the military was asked to make do with less just as the rest of Argentine society had been called upon to do.<sup>102</sup>

In order to offset the effects on readiness and morale, the Menem government made a serious attempt to restructure the military and to modernize the force. This restructuring had a direct impact on the high command. Over a five year period, the numbers of general and flag officers were cut between twenty-five percent and thirty percent. Additionally, Menem altered the criteria for the general officer promotion list

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<sup>101</sup> Pion-Berlin, 108-109.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 125-126.

submitted by the high command. While keeping traditional criteria of past assignment and performance of duty, he added the exclusion of officers who had participated in the December 1990 coup and who did not support his economic and foreign policies. Over forty colonels were eliminated on these grounds.<sup>103</sup>

The modernization of the Argentine armed forces has had a significant impact on professional military tradition in that country. Law number 24.429, entitled *Servicio Militar Voluntario* (Voluntary Military Service), promulgated on 5 January 1995, regulates military service in Argentina. The law establishes a voluntary military service yet reserves for the congress the right to conscript 18-year-olds for a period of service not to exceed one year. Such conscription may be ordered when, for enunciated reasons, an inadequate number of volunteers present themselves for military service. Prior to this law enlistment was involuntary.<sup>104</sup>

Officer recruitment has changed. Traditionally, the officer corps was drawn from the military academies. Now, officers are drawn from other sources as well. Promotion is based on examination rather than solely on seniority. A new emphasis is being placed on the reserve officer corps and should have the effect of drawing on a more diverse base of recruits. Noncommissioned officer recruitment will additionally draw on even more nontraditional sources of talent. The entire effect is to institute an officer corps along the North American model. This reformed corps is less of a closed caste, with few ties to the

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<sup>103</sup> Zagorski, "The Armed Forces Under the Menem Government," 428.

<sup>104</sup> Conscientious Objector Status for Selected Countries. Online. <http://www.serve.com/pec/campaigns/co.html>. 22 November 1998.



civilian world, than at any time in modern Argentine history.<sup>105</sup>

#### **D. ARGENTINA AS A CASE OF CONCORDANCE?**

As I indicated at the opening of this chapter, for concordance theory to be both valid and predictive, then prior to the current era of democratic rule, one would expect to find that there existed general disagreement among the “three partners”—the political elite, the military, and the citizenry—with respect to the four indicators identified by Schiff. Likewise, following the return to democracy in 1983, we expect to find that concordance has been reached and that it is this state of agreement among the “three partners” that has prevented a return to military government. In this section I will evaluate the historical record in an effort to determine if that is indeed the case.

##### **1. The Social Composition of the Officer Corps**

Schiff identifies the composition of the officer corps as a primary indicator of concordance. While in most democratic societies the officer corps usually represents the various constituencies of the nation, broad representation is not a requisite for concordance. What is important is that historical and cultural traditions prevail in nations and that those traditions can affect agreement over the composition of the officer corps.

The first thing that stands out is that prior to the current era of democracy, Argentina was not democratic and its officer corps was not representative of society. Officers were drawn exclusively from the military academies. The military in general and

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<sup>105</sup> Zagorski, “The Armed Forces Under the Menem Government,” 429.

especially the officer corps had very few ties to civilian sectors. It is difficult to assess if there was general agreement among the three partners with respect to the composition of the officer corps during this period. However, composition was based on the cultural and historical traditions of the nation up to that point in time. There is much evidence to suggest that the officer corps certainly viewed themselves as a distinct and separate class from the rest of society. Another problematic issue is that at any given time during this period of history it was difficult at best to differentiate between the senior officers and the political elite. They both competed for the same goal—political power. We can say that there was at least some disagreement between the military and the political elite at various junctures in this time period with regard to this indicator of concordance.

Following the return to democracy, the Menem government has adopted the North American model for selecting and educating officers from a broader societal base. However, it is hard to say that this has widespread support among the “three partners.” The evidence suggests that this is more a strategy on the part of the political elite to reform the officer corps into a more manageable institution. For the sake of argument, one can at least say that the “three partners” do not disagree on this indicator of concordance.

## **2. The Political Decision-Making Process**

The political decision-making process, as an indicator, involves the institutional organizations of society that affect how the military operates and its satisfaction in general. According to Schiff, these factors include: budget, size, materials, and structure.

The political decision-making process does not suggest a particular form of government. It is valid for democratic or authoritarian systems. Instead, it refers to the specific channels that determine the needs and allocations of the military. The question is: do the "three partners" agree over the political process that best meets the needs of the military?

Before the current era of democracy, one would have to conclude that the question is irrelevant because the military determined its needs and allocated the funds as it saw fit. The military did not need to reach agreement with the other partners. During periods of direct military rule, the political elite and the citizenry were not in a position to oppose the military. At other times the threat of military intervention allowed the military to assert their prerogatives with or without public or political support. Thus, prior to the reintroduction of democracy in 1983, it is impossible to determine whether this is an indicator of concordance. Pressed to make a call, I would have to say that although there was not general agreement among the partners, other factors may have been at play.

Following the transition to democracy, the issue of concordance is clearer. Under the Alfonsín government, there obviously was not agreement among the partners with respect to the political decision-making process. While Alfonsín clearly enjoyed the support of the citizenry in his efforts to restructure the military, the officer corps balked on the unrelated issue of trials over human rights violations. This led to the three revolts and a political-military stalemate between the military and the government. Still, it was not the issues of budget, size or material that led to the deadlock. Rather, it was the issue of a perceived attack on the military as an institution that led to the threat of intervention. This point was reinforced by what transpired during the early years of the Menem

administration. Menem reduced the military budget, cut the size of both the force and the officer corps and at the same time shifted control of the military budget away from the high command and into the Ministry of Economics. Yet it appears that the military, while not liking it, have accepted their fate for the good of the nation. From Schiff's perspective this could be viewed as concordance. From another point of view, however, it could be said that issues of budget, size, and material are not as critical indicator as concordance theory would suggest.

### **3. The Recruitment Method**

The third indicator of concordance is the recruitment method of the armed forces, which refers to the enlistment of citizens into the armed forces. Recruitment may be either coercive or persuasive. Generally, coercive recruitment does not normally allow for concordance between the military and the citizenry. Persuasive recruitment, by definition, indicates that a state of concordance exists.

As we have seen in this chapter, Argentina had a persuasive (albeit obligatory) recruitment method during both periods examined.<sup>106</sup> However, since the advent of Law number 24.429 in January 1995, the method has become completely voluntary and follows the North American model. Once again, a comment is due here about the efficacy of recruitment method as an indicator. Since the recruits are heavily drawn from the Argentine underclass, they generally represent a group that is not politically powerful

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<sup>106</sup> See page 30 of this thesis for Schiff's explanation of how persuasive recruitment may be either voluntary or involuntary.

enough to matter. Thus, it is again uncertain that this is a relevant indicator of concordance.

#### **4. The Military Style**

The final indicator of concordance is military style. This refers to a mix of what the military looks like, what people think about it, and what guiding beliefs drive it. As an indicator, military style attempts to determine how symbolism and ritual pervade the relationship of the military to other sectors of society. These symbols and rituals form part of the history and culture of the nation; they bestow upon the military a sense of respectability, professionalism, separateness, and cohesiveness. They affect the nature of the officer corps, the methods of induction into the military, and the institutional processes that determine the needs and requirements of the armed forces.

In the period from 1930 to 1983, it could be convincingly argued that the military style was difficult to differentiate from that of the political elites. It was a period of authoritarian presidents and military governments, all equally unsuited to the task of governing the nation. The military ritual that was repeated time and again was the regular intervention into the political realm. The military saw itself as a coequal partner in the political game. Senior military leaders would ally themselves with either civilian or political elites to oust the incumbent government at will. They were at once a symptom of and a contributor to the general state of lawlessness that existed prior to the transition to democracy. In symbolic terms, the military certainly viewed itself as the guardians of the nation. Almost every intervention or human rights violation was justified by their

overriding obligation to restore order out of chaos and to protect the "paper" democracy from the socialist threat. In that this was the widely accepted state of affairs during this period, it must be said that concordance was the norm. However, at the points just prior to each coup of the period, a state of discordance existed between the military faction that initiated the coup and the political elite in charge at the time.

Following the return to democracy in 1983, both the military and the civilian administrations were predisposed to redefine the traditional roles of the military. This is not to say that the transformation was immediate, as the various revolts under Alfonsín indicate. However, under Menem, it appears that the military, the political elites, and the citizenry were able to agree that economic considerations should dominate. This gave the administration the ability to reduce the armed forces through budget cuts and force reductions while convincing the military that they should endure their share of the burden for the good of the nation. Changes in officer recruitment, training and selection for promotion combined with a clearly defined external defense orientation should help to solidify this change in military style. This may represent a turning point in Argentine civil-military relations.

Given the analysis presented here, it would appear that by testing Schiff's theory of concordance against the case of Argentina, the theory generally holds up. There are, however, several problematic aspects of concordance theory which I will address in my conclusions. I am not convinced that in the case of Argentina there are clearly delineated criteria that differentiate between the three partners. This problem is highlighted by the evidence of the indistinguishability between political, civilian, and military elites at various

junctures of my examination. Further, I am not comfortable that the four indicators selected by Schiff accurately measure the likelihood for the occurrences of military coups. As I have discussed, often military coups are the result of other, more pertinent factors. Yet, there is an aspect of the theory that resonates with reason: that the civil-military relation that a nation manifests at any given point in history, is at least conditioned by its historical and cultural experiences. In the closing chapter, I will address these and other issues in an attempt to rehabilitate this intriguing theory.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

### A. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The case of Argentina presents a host of problematic issues for the student of civil-military relations. The purpose of this thesis was to challenge the prevailing assumptions of current CMR theory and to test a new theory against the case of Argentina. A long-standing assumption of current CMR theory is that of a dichotomous relationship between civilian and military spheres. Domestic military intervention is prevented if civilian institutions are in control of and maintain a check over a professional military. Domestic military intervention is more likely if civilian institutions do not exist or are too weak to control the armed forces.

This thesis sought to challenge these basic assumptions and, to a certain degree, failed. As we have seen in the preceding chapter, Argentina prior to the 1983 return of democracy witnessed the existence of a military institution that viewed itself as a coequal political partner. The historical pattern that had been set was one in which the armed forces habitually entered into pacts with both civilian and political elites in order to seize power or to exercise control over the government decision-making. Following the democratization of Argentina after 1983, that dynamic has changed due to the widespread stigmatization of the armed forces in the wake of their failures in governing, their defeat in the Falklands/Malvinas war, and their abuses of power during the "dirty war." The Menem government was able to significantly reduce the size of the military organization, gain control over the military budget process, and begin to model the armed forces after



the U.S. example. All of these facts tend to support the current theory of civil-military relations.

However, Argentina's historical and social experiences make the period from 1930 to 1983 difficult to explain in terms of separation theory. During the colonial period, when the military emerged as the first unified national force, the armed forces and society as a whole fell into a pattern of military interventionism. At the same time the nation adopted a centralized power model usually headed by a populist president. The ruling ability of these disproportionately powerful presidents was equally bad regardless of whether they were civilian or military. It was virtually impossible to distinguish between elites among the military, civilian, or political sectors. The military intervened in politics more out of traditional habit than because of the weakness of civilian institutions. In fact, as we have seen, civilians often conspired with the military to replace elected presidents. Yet, once that paradigm was altered by the cumulative effects of the Falklands/Malvinas debacle, the human rights abuses of the "dirty war," and a failed economic plan, the way was paved for permanent alterations in the civil-military power relationship. As Argentina experiences a continued pattern of democratic electoral transitions and its institutions habituate themselves to operating within the confines of a new politico-historical context, then the likelihood that the military will reenter the political arena will gradually dissipate.

The second purpose of this thesis was to test Rebecca Schiff's theory of concordance against the case of Argentina. As one of the few new attempts to seek alternatives to the concept of separation, I had hoped to find that this theory would better explain both the occurrence of military interventions prior to the return to democracy and

the lack of intervention since 1983. While it superficially appears that Schiff's theory holds true in the case of Argentina, I contend that concordance theory works, but for different causal reasons.

## **B. CRITIQUE OF CONCORDANCE THEORY**

### **1. The Three Partners**

My primary argument with concordance theory is a methodological one. Simply put, I am not certain that the phenomena observed in the case of Argentina (or in Schiff's cases of Israel and India) are necessarily the result of agreement or disagreement among the "three partners" with respect to the four indicators of concordance. Here I will divide my critique between both the concept of the three partners and Schiff's four indicators.

I have to challenge Schiff's belief that society can be neatly subdivided into what she calls the "three partners." It is not clear to me that her definitions describe distinct societal subgroups or that these groups interact as partners in the political realm. First, Schiff defines the military as "the armed forces and the personnel." She makes no distinction between the officer corps and the enlisted ranks. Further, she does not differentiate between a military elite and the remainder of the officer corps. This is problematic in that the armed forces are not a monolithic organization. Not only are they divided by service (army, navy, and air force), they are also separated by hierarchy. Only a few senior officers interact with other political actors. The composition of this elite changed over time in the case of Argentina. At times the senior leadership of the high command sought to intervene in the political realm out of military institutional interests.

Sometimes, intervention was based on the individual quest for political power of an individual officer or group of officers. In yet other instances the military hierarchy was changed from outside the institution by overly powerful presidents and another military elite was created from officers of lesser rank. My point is that it is next to impossible to identify who the military elite is for the purposes of testing the theory.

Schiff identifies the political elite in terms of their function. Cabinets, presidents, prime ministers, party leaders, parliaments, and monarchies are all possible forms of government elites and thus exercise influence over the armed forces. The problem with this definition is that, at least in the case of Argentina, military officers could be added to the list of political elites. In the fifty year history of military interventionism examined in this thesis, military elites were virtually indistinguishable from political elites. They were, at various times, one and the same. Even when not directly exercising political power, they exercised power indirectly through coercion and threat of intervention.

Schiff holds that a nation's citizens form a subgroup of the "civil" part of CMR. Concordance theory regards the citizenry as a coequal partner with the military and political elite. If the military is not a monolith, then the citizenry is an even more diluted societal component. In a centralized political system with a historical predisposition to personalistic presidents, it is difficult to view the citizenry as a political player that matters. In fact, during the long decades of authoritarian rule, the citizens vote counted for little and their support often led to military intervention and continued authoritarian rule. Once again, in the case of Argentina, I must argue that only certain elite members of civil society are able to negotiate with elites of the military and political sectors in order to agree on the

role of the military within society.

## **2. The Four Indicators**

My main argument with Schiff's four indicators of concordance is that they do not appear to measure the likelihood of military intervention or of a coup attempt. The four indicators outlined in Schiff's theory include: the social composition of the officer corps, the political decision-making process, the recruitment method, and the military style. In this section I will examine each of the four indicators in an effort to illustrate this methodological weakness.

Schiff identifies the social composition of the officer corps as a primary indicator of concordance. She highlights the role of the officer corps in defining the relationship with the rest of society and in providing links to the citizenry and the government. A problem with this indicator is that no specific composition is required for concordance to occur. The officer corps may be either representative of the greater society or not, so long as the three partners agree on the composition. This indicator is problematic in that even if there were agreement between the three partners, this would not necessarily mean that the military is less likely to intervene in the political arena. In fact, from a bureaucratic politics perspective, one would expect that once a member of the officer corps, the individual officer will manifest the ideology of the institution. Therefore, an officer's social background is of little consequence once he has spent a career seeking to gain a higher position within the hierarchy of the armed forces.

The political decision-making process, as an indicator of concordance, involves the

institutional organizations of society that affect how the military operates and its satisfaction in general. The process does not suggest a particular form of government. Instead, it refers to the specific channels that determine the needs and allocations of the military. What is critical, according to Schiff, is that agreement be reached by the three partners over the political process that best meets the requirements of the armed forces. In the case of Argentina, this indicator fails to measure concordance because for much of its history, the military elite determined its requirements without the need to consult with the other societal partners. Following the return to democracy, the armed forces were not in a position to negotiate from the same position of power because as an institution the military had been discredited. What they did negotiate for was not budget, size, material, or structure, rather, it was for immunity from prosecution in human rights trials.

The third indicator of concordance is the recruitment method of the armed forces. Given that, in the case of Argentina the recruitment method of the military was persuasive both before and after the return to democracy, there is little to analyze here. Although, since the method had become completely voluntary as of 1995, there is greater evidence of concordance now. According to Schiff, persuasive recruitment is only possible in the presence of concordance between the three partners. Still, I am not convinced that if there were not agreement among the partners over this indicator, there would be sufficient causation to lead to a military coup. If there were a significant security threat to the nation and the military was not able to respond due to an inability to draft sufficient manpower, then there might be cause for a coup. However, this scenario is a dubious cause for military intervention, since in the presence of a clear threat to the survival of the

nation, the military would most likely have little difficulty obtaining recruits.

The final indicator of concordance is military style. This factor represents what the military looks like, what people think about it, and what guiding beliefs drive it. As an indicator, military style attempts to determine how symbolism and ritual pervade the relationship of the military to other sectors of society. These symbols and rituals form part of the history and culture of the nation; they bestow upon the military a sense of respectability, professionalism, separateness, and cohesiveness. They affect the nature of the officer corps, the methods of induction into the military, and the institutional processes that determine the needs and requirements of the armed forces. While all of this makes for interesting discussion, the problem from a social science perspective is how to measure the degree of agreement over this indicator of concordance. Even if this indicator was more carefully defined, would disagreement among the three partners over the military style, be sufficient to cause the armed forces to initiate a coup? I am not sure.

### C. IMPLICATIONS

The one part of concordance theory that seems to hold promise is its core argument against current civil-military relations theory. Unlike current CMR theory—with a focus on its western-bound, dichotomous, and institutional nature—the theory of concordance highlights dialogue, accommodation, and shared values or objectives among the military, the political elites, and society. Concordance theory attempts to accomplish two objectives. First, it strives to explain which institutional and cultural conditions, including separation, integration, or some alternative relation, promote

or prevent domestic military intervention. This is an interesting tact, since in the past integration has at times been confused with intervention. Second, the theory predicts that when there is general agreement among the three partners, the military is less likely to intervene domestically. Although Schiff does not make the statement, it follows that when there is not agreement among the three partners, then intervention should be more likely.

As I have discussed at length in Chapters III and IV of this thesis, current CMR theory has its own limitations given that it was developed to explain U.S. civil-military relations. It is almost unthinkable that current CMR theory would apply without modification in a Latin American case. Yet, in the case of Argentina, Huntington's prescription for separation and professionalization of the military seems to have worked in the period since 1983. However, it would be unlikely that such prescriptions would have been viable in the period prior to the return to democracy, due to the historical and cultural context of the time.

I argue that each nation must find its own way to democratic forms. Once memories of old patterns of authoritarianism have been supplanted by more democratic experiences, then concordance will have the opportunity to take hold. Given this set of circumstances, one can envision a modified theory of concordance. Schiff may be on the right track when she considers the concept of three partners, but the theory needs to be modified to include only elites within each sector, those who are in a position to negotiate. For indicators of concordance I would suggest the following based upon my analysis of the Argentine case: (1) Do the elites agree that the way the military is structured, trained, equipped, and led is appropriate to the level of threat the nation faces? (2) Do the elites

agree on the roles and functions of the military within society? (3) Do the elites agree on the type and nature of civilian control exercised over the military? If the elites among the citizenry, the military, and the political sectors can answer yes to each of these questions, then one might be able to say that concordance has been achieved and that the likelihood of military intervention has been mitigated.

Separation theory has provided CMR theory with a base for over five decades. What is now needed is additional theoretical work on the military's withdrawal from political power. The case of the United States is not sufficient to address the issues raised by a transition from authoritarian rule. Rebecca Schiff has at least attempted to develop a new framework. It does not yet meet the obligations of a theory. Yet, she has identified the problems in the existing theory and pointed the way towards helping to keep newly founded democracies and even older democracies safe from the interventions, coups, and political tampering by their military establishments.





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